

REMARKS

Claims 1 - 20 are presently pending in the application.

Request for Continued Examination

The Examiner notes in the Advisory Action of August 15, 2003 that a new search would be required to consider the allowability of the claims in relation to the 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 Amendment filed on July 21, 2003. Accordingly, the Request for Continued Examination herewith filed will allow the Examiner to conduct a new search and consider the patentability of the instant invention's claims as amended by the Amendment filed July 21, 2003.

Government Closure Automatically Extends Due Date to September 22, 2003

It is noted that with a two-month extension of time, the Request for Continued Examination herewith filed was due on September 19, 2003. Due to the U.S. federal government being closed on September 19, 2003, however, the actual due date for the Request for Continued Examination is accorded the date of September 22, 2003 with a two-month extension of time.

Typographical Error in Advisory Action and Examiner's Statement in Interview Summary

The Advisory Action of August 15, 2003 mistakenly included box 2(d) being checked on Form PTO-303. Box 2(d) being checked indicates that the After Final Amendment filed July 21, 2003 was not entered because that amendment presented additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims.

It is clear on the record, however, that the After Final Amendment filed on July 21, 2003 did not present any new claims. Therefore, it is respectfully asserted that the checking of box 2(d), when, in fact, no new claims were presented, amounts to a typographical error. Moreover,

the Interview Summary of September 5, 2003 is incorrect by stating that “if no new claim *amendments* were submitted . . . ” (italics supplied).

Applicant respectfully points out that the Interview Summary should instead indicate that “if no new *claims* were submitted with the previous after final, the checking of box 2(d) in paper #2 was in error.”

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

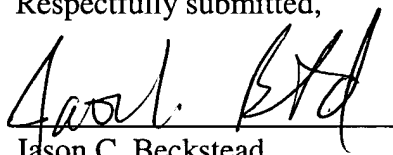
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